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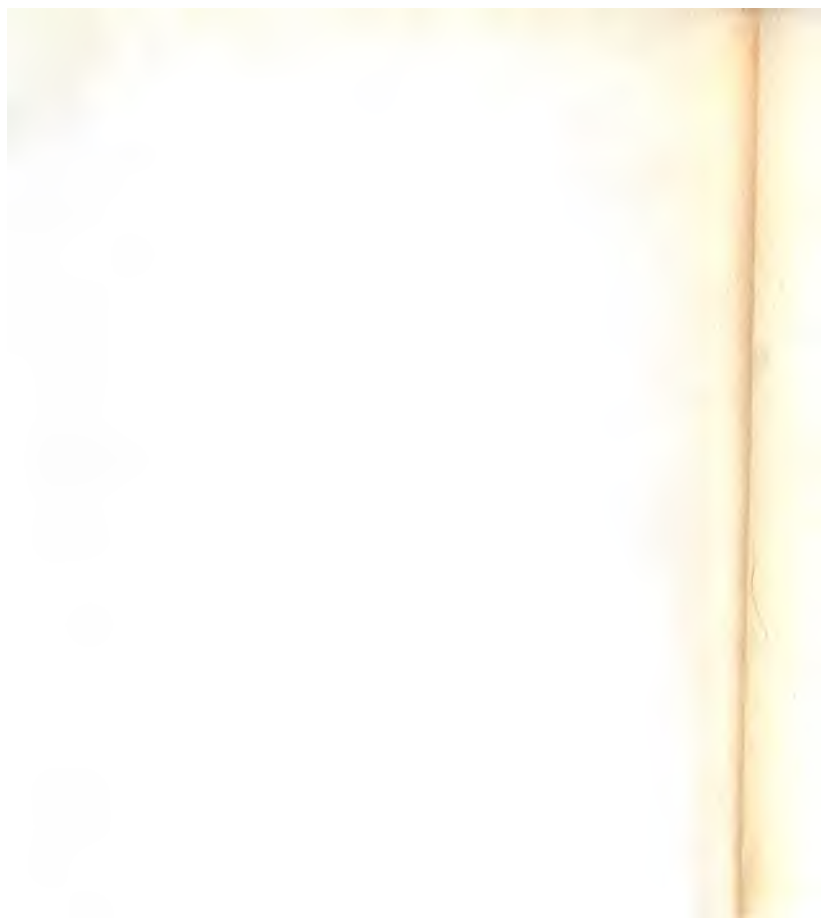
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to EAST."

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NOTES ON COREA,

BY

A. W. D.

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PORTS OF COREA.—No. I.

FU-SAN (釜山)

Lat. 35° 7' 0" N.

Long. 128° 2' 0" E.

The Japanese have held possession of the port—by right of conquest—since the close of the 16th century, when their armies invaded this unhappy country; but there was little or no intercourse between them and the natives until after the signing of the treaty which the Japanese extorted from the Korean Government in 1876. The settlement is prettily situated at the foot of a conical pine-clad hill, and massive fir trees of over a century's growth spread their giant arms over many of the tiny wooden houses and broad streets of the town. Facing the town is a large island* called by foreigners "Deer Island." It has the reputation of being well stocked with game of various kinds.

*Referring to this island, the author of "The Hermit Nation" says "it has hills 300 ft. high. Hundreds of horses are reared on this island, hence it is often called 'Ma-Ki' or i-land of green pastures." The fact is that the hills referred to are over 800 ft. high, and not a horse is to be seen anywhere on the island.

The same author declares that "Steamers ply between Fu-san and Nagasaki in four hours," a statement which has upset the calculations of more than one traveller already. The distance is 160 miles, and a steamer of average speed requires fourteen to sixteen hours to make the trip. It is not surprising that a man who writes about a country he has never seen should make many mistakes.

The population of the settlement is estimated at 1,800 chiefly the "scum" of Japan and emigrants from Tsu-shima. Hundreds of Koreans flock to the town daily to dispose of their wares, and many are employed as coolies (the Japs being the "superior" race) but very few are permitted to reside there, and none are allowed to open houses of business. Beside the recently opened Custom House with its staff of European officers, Fu-san can boast of many public offices, such as the Japanese Consulate and National Bank, Mitsubishi S. S. Agency, Chamber of Commerce, Hospital, Great Northern Telegraph Office, &c. It also rejoices in the possession of a public bath, where bipeds of both sexes perform their ablutions together in Paradisean innocence. Foreign stores also abound, and those inevitable accompaniments of advanced civilization—grog-shops—are somewhat in excess of the requirements of the place. All the trade is in the hands of the Japanese, who intend to keep it as long as they can. They "bully" the natives just as our enlightened countrymen, conscious of their immense superiority, formerly treated the natives of China and India, but when the Chinese begin to compete with them, and offer such prices for the produce of the country as shall make it worth while for the Koreans to convey it to the ports, the Japanese must either be more upright in their dealings or see the trade slip out of their grasp. The chief exports are hides, bones, gall-nuts, sea-weed, fish, sharks' fins, pearl shells, tobacco, beans, hemp, grass cloth, copper ore, gold dust, &c. A seam of coal is said to have been discovered a few miles from the port, but it has not yet been worked. The Korean city of Fu-san is about three miles from the settlement, but on the same side of

the bay, it presents no feature of especial interest, for everything about it betokens the most abject poverty. The city walls are much the same as those in China, but most of the houses are miserable mud huts, with straw-thatched roofs. Ten miles inland is another city of dingy clay-coloured hovels which spoils the beauty of a magnificent scene. This is Tung-nai (Jap. Torai), famous in Korean history as the first city garisoned to resist the Japanese invaders in the 16th century.

The road to this city is eight feet wide, well drained and kept in good repair, as are nearly all the main roads in the country, except where they run through thinly populated and mountainous districts. In this particular Korea is far ahead of her celestial neighbour, for in China a good road is hard to find.

The harbour of Fu-san is almost all that could be desired, for it has good anchorage, and being almost locked in by lofty hills, is well protected from the typhoons which, judging from the number of large trees to be seen broken or torn up by the roots, do sometimes visit this part of the peninsula.

Foreigners have not lived here long enough to ascertain what the climate is like at all seasons of the year, but should the summer months be found cool and dry, and frequent communication with Shanghai be established, Fu-san will become a formidable rival to Chefoo as a sanatorium. The scenery is prettier, the roads better, and the harbour safer for boating than at Chefoo, but the presence of large sharks will no doubt be a drawback to those fond of bathing.

At present there is no hotel accommodation, so visitors have to depend on the ever-ready hospitality of the Customs officers, but there is a Japanese boarding-house where a very good table is kept. The "Great Northern"

cable ship arrived here Nov. 21st, 1888, and laid the submarine cable between this port and Japan, so now the once "Hermit Nation" is in telegraphic communication with the world from which it has been so long isolated.

PORTS OF COREA.—No. II.

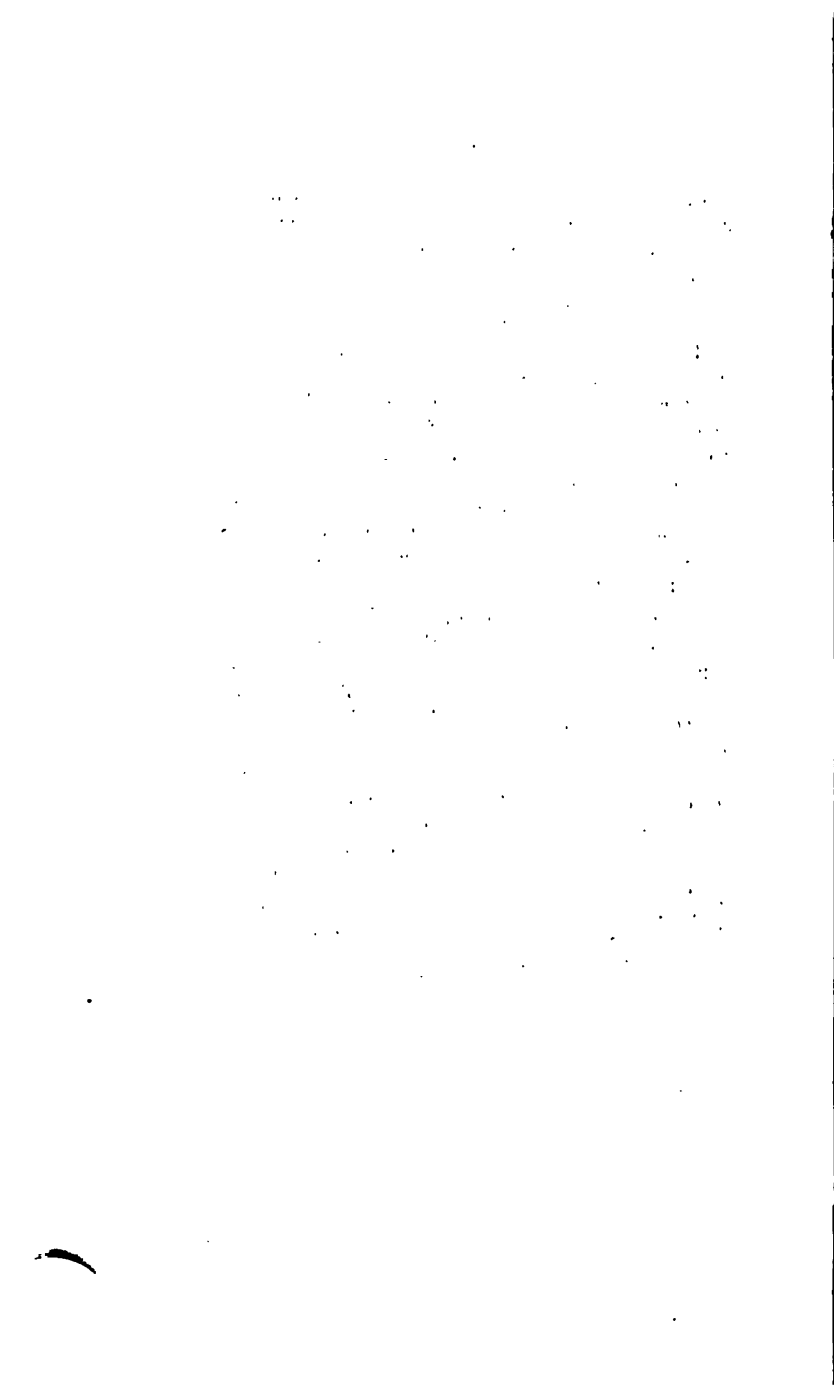
YUEN-SAN (元山).

Lat. 39° 19' 12" N.

Long. 127° 25' 0" E.

Yuen-san is on the east coast of the peninsula, nearly half-way between Fusan and Vladivostock. It is perhaps better known by its old names,—Gen-san, Port Lazaref, and Broughton's Bay. There has been a small Japanese settlement here since 1880, when the port was first opened in accordance with the Treaty of 1876. There are the same number of public offices as in Fusan, but only very few business houses, and only about a hundred residents. The houses (which were built in Japan) are mostly wooden structures, half European and Japanese style; they look pretty, but are quite unsuited to the climate of this place, where the winter season is long, and almost arctic in severity. The site of the settlement was evidently chosen by men ignorant of sanitary laws, for the ground is wet and spongy, and it is bounded on one side by a huge swamp. The European settlement will be on the slope of a hill, two or three miles from the present site, and in a more healthy locality.

The native town of Yuen-san is about a mile from the settlement, on the highway to the capital, and is a long straggling town with only one street, having a few short lanes branching from it. It has two market places where fairs are held every five days. The



primitive structures, composed of rough timber, across which the small branches of trees are laid, and over these a thick layer of mud. Near Teh-yuen-fu the roads are shaded by a double row of willows and cedars, which add much to the beauty of its natural surroundings.

The country is mountainous and well wooded. Tigers and leopards are so numerous that in winter it is unsafe to venture off the main roads. Even the streets of the settlement and towns are visited by these ferocious beasts when the snow compels them to leave the hills in search of food. They have been known to force an entrance into the huts of the natives by springing upon the roof and scratching a hole in the thatch.

Minerals are supposed to abound in this neighbourhood, and certainly there must be an "El Dorado" somewhere near, judging from the quantity of gold exported. The *Tsuruya Maru*, which called at this port Nov. 13th *en route* for Japan, took away nearly a hundred pounds weight of the precious metal in dust and bars. How much has previously been exported is not known, for the new Customs regulations did not come in force till Nov. 3rd.

The chief exports are gold, hides, bones, horns, beans and fish. Large quantities of the latter—a sort of sprat or sardine—are sent to Japan for manure.

ruined by severe epidemics of measles. In Year the Cemetery are numerous gravestones erected to the memory of other members of the Japanese Embassy who were murdered in Seoul and in Jeonju in 1882.

As Jeonju is the only port off a the provinces and is close proximity to them, except it will eventually become one of the two flourishing ports of the kingdom; but hitherto the Customs revenue has been derived, chief from imports. Seoul and a few other thinly populated cities consume nearly all that the province can produce, so there is little left for export but hides, bones and gallinules, for which the natives seem to have little use. Here, as in the other ports, the trade is mostly in the hands of the Japanese, but now the Chinese are beginning to compete with them.

Messrs. Jardine, Matheson & Co. have an agent here also, and have entered into an agreement to run a steamer regularly between Shanghai, Nagasaki, Fusan and Jeonju. The Japanese are already beginning to fear that the trade will not long be in their hands, and there is every indication that what they dread will soon come to pass.

THE CAPITAL OF COREA.

SÉOUL OR HANYANG.

Séoul (pron. *Say-ool*) is nearly three miles from the river Han, and twenty-five miles from the port of Jen-chuan. It is located in what, but for the presence of the city itself, would be one of the most charming of the many lovely valleys of which this country is justly proud. The surrounding hills are well covered with fir and dwarf oak trees, which are used for fuel, few of them being allowed to grow large enough to be used for building purposes.

The approaches to the city from Jen-chuan are in a wretched condition, resembling more the bed of a mountain torrent than the entrance to a city which for nearly 500 years has been the seat of government.

Within the walls the streets are comparatively good, for they are well drained by deep gutters, but all unpaved. The principal street is about fifty feet wide, and runs the entire length of the city; it is lined on either side by straw-thatched sheds or booths in which are exposed for sale the various articles of clothing, food, &c., required by a people whose wants are few and easily supplied. In addition to these sheds there are a few small shops to be found in the other large thoroughfares, but all indicate the same absence of wealth among the people; and the native goods offered for sale are, with few exceptions, of the poorest and most primitive kind. The exact population of Séoul it is impossible to ascertain, but recent "official returns" show that the city

contains about 80,000 houses, so the population will not be less than 140,000. The dwelling-houses are all wretched looking shanties, but as a rule, although they present a very dingy appearance outside, they are clean inside, for the Koreans, like the Japanese, take off their shoes before entering their houses, the floors of which are either matted or covered with oiled paper. The rooms are small, the furniture scanty, and the adornments—where such exist—consist chiefly of gaudy water-colour drawings of historical personages or events. Notwithstanding the apparent abject poverty of the people, they all dress well and keep their outer garments clean; a beggar or a person in ragged attire being seldom seen in the streets.

The chief object of interest to the visitor to Seoul is the new Palace, which was abandoned a few years ago on account of the winter apartments having been destroyed by fire. The grand entrance is a triple archway, surmounted by a massive pavilion of wood and stone. The gates open upon a spacious courtyard, to the right and left of which are a number of low offices. Another gateway, flanked by two rows of buildings, opens into a second yard, and a third set of gates guard the entrance to a large hall, beyond which stands the Throne-room or Audience chamber in the centre of a large granite-paved court. It is a large wooden pavilion-like structure, somewhat like the principal building of a Chinese Buddhist temple; it is 50 feet long by 40 feet wide and stands upon a granite platform 5 feet high. Two tiers of broad overhanging tiles, supported by gaily decorated curved rafters and beams give it the appearance of a two-story building. Inside the hall all the woodwork from floor to ceiling is gaudily painted,—green, red and white being the pre-

vailing colours. The ceiling is composed of small panels, on each of which is painted a many coloured conventional flower, probably suggested by the *Chrysanthemum*. On a large panel in the centre is an embossed and gilded representation of two dragons, somewhat like those on Japanese coins.

The Throne is a square dais, 5 feet high, surrounded on three sides by papered screens, and partly closed in front by long curtains; on this stage is placed a three leaved carved wood screen, painted vermillion, within which the King used to sit. The floor of the hall is covered with canvas, and the windows are of the usual Eastern pattern, covered with tissue paper in lieu of glass. The winter apartments were behind the Throne-room, but all that remains of them now are the granite foundations and a few brick chimneys. These rooms were heated by flues running under the floor like the old fashioned propagating houses of European gardeners — the chimneys being built a few feet away from the walls of the building. The summer residence is built in the middle of a lotus pond, on a stone platform raised 8 feet above the water. It is a sort of bungalow, raised above the foundation by 50 granite pillars, each of which is a solid block of stone, 16 feet high and 2 feet 6 inches square at the base. The rooms above are reached by two flights of wooden stairs which open upon a verandah stripped of all furniture and ornaments. These once gay apartments look dreary and uninviting, but the view from the verandah is charming, especially when the lotus below are in full bloom and the hills above the hill, on the slope of which the palace adds much to the grandeur of the scene. An immense number of buildings have been crowded upon the three acres enclosed and enclosed by the palace walls.

there is not much space left for gardens and "park," but an attempt has been made to give a rural appearance to the place by planting fir trees on every available spot. To the student of Oriental history Séoul is a place of considerable interest, for it has been the scene of many bloody battles, and the goal of the many invading armies of Tartary, China and Japan. Here, too, many Jesuit priests, with hundreds of their faithful converts, have suffered martyrdom for conscience sake. In 1882 the Japanese Embassy was attacked by a mob and many of its members murdered at the instigation of that cruel fanatic Tai-wen-kun, now a prisoner at Paoting-fu in China. The events which followed this massacre are well known to most residents in the East; but for the benefit of those who have not kept pace with the recent changes of scene in the "Land of morning calm," they will be briefly explained in a future contribution to the *Star in the East*.

NOTES ON COREA.

The name "Corea" is a foreign corruption of the name anciently given to a portion of the peninsula, and for some time the official title of the whole country, but now long since fallen into disuse. Modern Koreans call their country by the *poetical* name of Cho-~~sen~~ or Chao-sien (朝鮮), which may be translated "Calm of dawn." The peninsula is said to be nearly as large as Great Britain, and to have a coast line of about 1,880 miles, enclosing an area of over 27,000 square miles. It is separated from its northern neighbours, Manchuria and Russia, by two rivers, the Tu-men and Ya-lu, both which are reported to flow from one source, a small lake near the summit of the Peh-t'eo-shan (白頭山),—these running, one north-east, the other south-west, cut off all connection with the mainland, thus turning the "peninsula" into an island. A range of mountains stretches from north to south and has not inaptly been called the "back-bone" of Corea; it keeps close to the east coast most of the way, and in the northern parts sends off "spinal processes" eastward, while longer branches run south-east: these—to complete the analogy—may be called the "ribs." The east coast presents the appearance of an unbroken chain of dark rocky mountains; it possesses very few harbours, and forms a splendid natural line of fortifications. The few vulnerable points—such as Yuen-san, which is only 200 miles from the capital—could be easily protected.

On the south and west coasts there are many fine harbours and bays, but those on the north-

east are difficult and dangerous to navigate, owing to the remarkably high tides, which in some places rise and fall 30 feet.

Innumerable islands stud the south and west coasts, some of them rising several hundred feet above the water, and, being covered with verdure, present a most charming view to one travelling in the small Japanese steamers which ply along the coast. The largest island is that of Quelpart on the south-east, formerly used as a penal colony to which the "suspects" were banished from the mainland. In the middle of the island is a mountain over 6,000 ft. high, on the top of which is the crater of an ancient volcano. The whole island has the appearance of having been the scene of violent volcanic action, and in this it is not alone, for many of the islands on the south have the same appearance, and pumice-stone is very plentiful. The island of Tau-shima is also claimed by the Koreans as having originally been part of their archipelago, but it has been in the hands of the Japanese for many centuries, and is likely to remain there.

The kingdom is divided into eight provinces or circuits called *Tau* (道), and these are again divided into small districts for convenience of government.

The smallest province is that wherein the capital and the port of *Yenchuan* are situated, it is named *King-ki-tao* (京畿道), "the Royal province." The name conveys the idea that this is the "thousand li of land" which in ancient times was set apart for the Emperor's special use, a custom which once obtained in China. It is watered by the *Yalu*, which rises in the mountains of Manchuria, and is joined by many other rivers; and is joined by many other rivers, the largest being the river

which runs from the north and empties into the sea near its mouth, a few miles east of the famous island of Kangdewa.

The province is divided into thirty-six districts, and contains a population of about 880,000, rather a small number for the capital province, but probably not an underestimate, for with the exception of several the so-called "villages" are merely large villages, and in no place does the province appear to be thickly populated. Fully half the area of this province—and indeed of the whole country—is completely barren, in which nothing is grown but timber and fish, and near the coast much of the land in the plains is left uncultivated. The idea is abroad that Corea is a densely peopled country, but that is certainly a mistake.

According to an official census taken a few years ago, the number of "men" (男) or houses in the eight provinces is 1,715,653, and the vast majority of these households, being small lots, it is not probable that the average number of inmates in each house will exceed four, so, allowing that every 20, we have in the whole country less than seven millions of souls.

While travelling round Corea, recently, the writer was surprised to find how few children there are in the villages compared with similar places in China. I believe that the reason is

the poor state of the country, and the want of rice, and cereals.

are exported to other parts of the country, and the provinces produce of fish, and other articles, such as wheat, rice, &c.

The mountains are very high, and the valleys are very fertile, and the people are very industrious, and the country is very rich in minerals, and other products.

Large herds of cattle, and other animals, are kept in the mountains, and the people are very rich in minerals, and other products.

food of the common people. The bulls are used as beasts of burden, and are trained to carry enormous loads.

Next to gold, the most valuable article exported is ginseng, a species of panax or lvywort, the root of which is highly esteemed by the Chinese. Wild ginseng is very scarce, and consequently very expensive. It is said to be from one hundred to two hundred years old, and to be worth in China from \$80 to \$100 a catty. This kind is not exported, and every root discovered by the "ginseng hunters" is supposed to be sent to the King, who sends it to China as part of the annual tribute. The cultivation of this plant involves an immense amount of care and hard work, for the mould in which the seed is sown has to be carried from the distant forests, and the young plants have to be carefully protected by cloth awnings from the heat of summer and the frost of winter. After eight or ten years of this laborious care, the root is ready for pulling, and is then scraped, trimmed and steamed to prepare it for the market. The producer receives from half a dollar to three dollars a catty as the reward of his labour, according to the quality of the root; it is heavily taxed by the Government, consequently a brisk smuggling trade is carried on. The finer qualities are sold in Chinese drug shops for \$1 a dram, which is more than fifty times the sum originally paid to the grower. It is lightly esteemed in Europe, but it is without doubt a valuable tonic, and but for its high price it would be more extensively used.

P'ING-AN-TAO (平安道).

The Tranquil Province.

A less appropriate name could hardly have been found for this province where probably more blood has been shed than in any other part of the country. It forms the north-west border of the peninsula, and is separated from Manchuria by the river Ya-loo (鴨綠). Before the opening of sea ports to foreign commerce, P'ing-an was one of the most important provinces in the kingdom, for it was on its northern border that all the trade between this country and the outer world was carried on. It is reported to be rich in mineral wealth, but nothing has yet been done to develop its resources,—in fact the officials here and in every other province have nipped in the bud every effort made by the people to obtain the wealth which they believe is treasured up in their hills. P'ing-an is the largest of the eight provinces, but the population is only about 1,174,000; only the south and east parts are cultivated, the rest being left to the tigers and other wild beasts which abound in all the Corean forests. The "cities" marked on the maps of north-east P'ing-an are but large villages, where the hunters and wood-cutters dwell. Sometime during the sixteenth century the Koreans and Chinese agreed to establish a strip of neutral territory between their respective countries, but of course, China being the stronger nation, this strip was all taken

from the Koreans, and the Ya-loo River was fixed as their boundary, the old stake barrier being retained as the nominal boundary of China.

Previous to the fixing of this most unscientific frontier, the strip of land between the wall of stakes and the river—said to be about 10,000 square miles—was in a very flourishing condition, and had a population of over 800,000 agriculturists. These were all removed, their towns and villages razed to the ground, and the fields they had cultivated left to return to their primitive state. In course of time this "nobody's" land was re-populated by outlaws and refugees from both countries, and the hills near the river afforded shelter to numerous bands of pirates and brigands, who made frequent raids into either country whenever an opportunity of doing so presented itself. The Korean boundary could not be moved, but the wall of wooden stakes gradually disappeared, and the progressive Manchurian settler quietly pushed eastward until the "neutral land" became virtually Chinese soil. In 1875 the whole territory was formally annexed by the Chinese under the pretext of putting down piracy.

The highway from Séoul to Peking passes through the eastern part of P'ing-an and winds along the north-west coast to the city of Yi-cheo (義州), near the banks of the Ya-loo, across which passengers are conveyed in flat ferry boats; the road then runs north-west about 50 miles to the old "Corean gate," called the "Fung-hwang-men" (鳳皇門), formerly the principal gate of the great stake barrier.

Here for centuries the Chinese and Koreans have met four times a year to trade with each other, but to this day no intercourse is allowed between the two peoples in the intervals be-

tween these market days. Four years ago Mr. J. Cameron of the China Inland Mission, visited this place, and thus describes it: "From Gan-tong I went 90 *li* north-west to the Korean gate, at which fairs are held. This gate is 80 *li* from Fung-hwang-t'ing, to which place I proceeded. A day or two afterwards, being the first day of the fair, I retraced my steps to the Korean gate, and spent a day there.

* * * * * The goods that arrived that day consisted chiefly of paper, for which there is great demand, as it is said to be more durable than that of Chinese manufacture. There is no barrier so far as I could see, but there is a gate at the eastern end of the village which is said to be shut excepting at fair times. On that occasion an official goes from Fung-hwang-t'ing and formally opens it. He and the Customs officer are said to receive a present of silver. The gate is no barrier, as the high road runs past the back of the village. Finding no hindrance to my wandering still further east, I left long before daylight, and soon found myself beyond the imaginary barrier, and on the neutral ground between China and Korea said to belong to neither country. It is not so, however, for all along the route I found Chinese settlers, who build houses and cultivate land, much of which appears to be good." Mr. Cameron reached the banks of the Ya-loo on the evening of the second day after leaving the gate, but was not permitted to cross. He observed "a good-sized city on the left bank," probably Yi-cheo, about which he remarks: "No Chinese are allowed to enter it or to cross the river anywhere."

This restriction has not yet been removed, for a Chinaman who tried to cross over without passport a few months ago was seized and decapitated on the spot. The Ta-tung River (大同江)—made famous by the destruction

of the American ship *General Sherman* and the murder of her crew in 1866—rises in the hills to the east of this province, and running south-west, flows into the Yellow Sea at the junction of the provinces—P'ing-an and Hwang-hai. The only city of any importance on this river is P'ing-jang (平壤,) the capital of the province and ancient capital of the kingdom of Kao-li. In 1593 this city, which was thought by the Koreans to be an impregnable fortress, fell into the hands of the Japanese invaders, who in their turn were driven out by the Chinese and Korean allied armies; and between the two the city was almost destroyed. The Ta-tung River is navigable for about 50 miles, but is very unsafe on account of the high tides.

HIEN-KING-TAO (咸鏡道),

Province of "Universal Lustre."

Hien-king is the most northern of the eight Tao, and is separated from Russian Manchuria, or as it is sometimes called "Southern Siberia," by the Teo-man Kiang (頭滿江), called "Tu-men" by the natives. In area it is almost equal to P'ing-an, but at least two-thirds of the province is uninhabited, except by wild beasts—tigers, leopards and black bears are very numerous in the north and west. It is said to be rich in mineral and metallic wealth. Copper and coal have both been found there, and gold dust is bartered at the port of Yuen-san in exchange for foreign goods. The population is under half a million, and most of these live near the coast, in the towns and villages, through which the one great highway of the province passes. Formerly it was more thickly populated; for until the Russians obtained possession of that part of Manchuria north-east of the Teo-man, the natives of Hien-king had a market for their produce at King-yuen (慶源), about 30 miles from the mouth of the river, where the Chinese merchants met them at stated times to trade, as they now do at the Korean Gate on the borders of the old neutral territory. But as that market has been closed to prevent intercourse between the Koreans and Russians, the traders have been compelled to desert the northern parts and

seek their living elsewhere. It is reported in Corea that the Government was so jealous of the Russians that they compelled the inhabitants of the country bordering on the Teo-man to move southward and leave their land desolate, so as to present as wretched and uninviting an appearance as possible to their greedy neighbours.

In this they measured the Russians by their own standard, for the Corean "Fathers of the people," as the mandarins are called, take such paternal interest in the welfare of their children and have such a strong objection to their becoming rich, lest their morals should be thereby corrupted, that they kindly deprive them of all surplus wealth, which they—some-what inconsistently—appropriate to their own use. Therefore, if a peasant or trader should be so depraved as to desire to lay up for himself treasure upon earth he must do it secretly, and always maintain an outward appearance of poverty, for the officials will find some pretext for "squeezing" him. Such being the common practice among "the powers that be" in Corea, it is not surprising that they should try to carry out on a large scale the tricks their people have taught them.

Their jealousy of Russian progress is by no means groundless, for they are not ignorant of the devices of the Government of St. Petersburg; and it was chiefly the fear of their country becoming a Russian province that caused them so suddenly to emerge from their cherished isolation and hold out the hand of friendship to other nations. The writer of these notes had an interview with one of the prefects of Hien-king a few months ago and was surprised to find him thoroughly acquainted with European politics. The old man chuckled with delight when speaking of the way his Government had "done" the Mus-

covites. He had a Chinese map of the world and pointing to India said, with a knowing wink, "the Russians would rather have that than our country." Near the southern border of Hieu-king is the port of Yuen-san, opened in 1880 to the Japanese, and more recently to Western nations. It is situated within the fine harbour known as Broughton's Bay and Port Lazaref, the only place on the coast where vessels can find refuge from storms. The governor of the province resides in a small city called Hing-hien (興咸), about 50 miles north of Yuen-san, and 280 miles from Séoul.

KIANG-YUEN-TAO (江源道),

"River Source" Province.

This province lies to the south of Hien-king and east of King-ki; it owes its name to the fact that all the branches of the river Han have their origin in the mountains which stretch along the east coast. The large river Hwang-tuen, which drains the southern province of King-shang, also has its source within the borders of Kiang-yuen. The area of the province is about 5,500 square miles, but the population is only 872,000. The greater part of the country is mountainous, and therefore uninhabitable; for the superstitious natives consider the hills to be the private demesne of the genii, into which no mortal may safely intrude. During the persecution of the Christians a few years ago, these mountains afforded shelter to many fugitives from the malice of the Tai-yuen-kuin, and on one occasion several Jesuit priests fled there for refuge, after nine of their companions had been murdered, and sought the shelter of a cave which they discovered; but they found to their horror that they had walked into a nest of young tigers, and were glad to retreat before the mother returned. Tigers are not so numerous here as further north, but in winter they come down in pursuit of the deer which abound near the coast. The plains are more suitable to the cultivation of rice than of other cereals, for the soil is always wet; but wheat, millet, kao-liang, and oats are also raised in considerable quantities, and the surplus carried to Séoul for sale. Arsenic and sulphur have been discovered in the hills, but for obvious

they return to their native land it is and trembling, for they know that if only suspected of complicity in the sea trade they will lose both their lives and money and their heads.

If all that is said about the province Hwang-hai proves true it will some day be one of the richest parts of the kingdom, supposed to possess extensive seams of tin, and mercury. A French Jesuit, who spent several years in Corea, declares that it is no country in the East to be compared with "La Corée" for metallic wealth. It is probably known the truth of this in years, for now that the "Hermit Nation" broken through its crust of isolation entered on the path of progress, it means to use the most of its resources. To do this it requires the assistance of European capital, and no doubt this will soon be forthcoming if wanted. Already foreign steam machinery has been introduced into the country, not yet been put into use, while several foreign gentlemen have travelled through the country "prospecting," and trying to ascertain its probable resources.

CHUNG-TS'ING-TAO (忠清道)

"Unstained Royalty" Province.

Chung-ts'ing has an area of nearly 4,780 square miles, and a population of about a million. It possesses ten or eleven walled towns, but with the exception of Chung-cheo (忠州), on one of the great roads leading to Séoul, and Kung cheo (公州) the provincial capital, they are small and unimportant. The spacious valleys of this province are drained by three small rivers, one an affluent of the Han, which runs through the north-east and joins the "great river" twenty miles east of Séoul. Another called the King-kiang (金江), or "golden river," has two sources, one near "Gold Hill," on the west border of King-shang province, and another near the southern border of King-ki-tao, and flowing across the province empties its waters into Basil's Bay. The third is a small stream which flows into St. Jerome's Gulf. There are several fine harbours for small craft on the coast, but vessels of deep draught cannot enter them with safety on account of the shoals and high tides. The best harbour is that called Nei Po (內波), for it is sheltered by a large island and by the P'ai-an peninsula.

Twenty-five miles inland from Nei po coast is a town called Teh-san (德山), near which are the family tombs of the present King of Corea. In 1864 the last of a long line of kings who had sat on the Throne for nearly five hundred years, died suddenly before he had time to appoint a successor, and consequently the

TS'UEN-LO-TAO (全羅道).

"Complete Network" Province.

The area of Ts'uen-lo is nearly 6,500 square miles, and the population 1,162,000 or thereabouts. The capital, Ts'uen-cheo (全州), is twenty miles from the northern border and near the source of a small river which flows into the Yellow Sea. It is remarkable that the capitals of five of the eight provinces are located in remote parts, distant thirty to fifty miles from the main roads. It may be that the frequent invasions by which the country was afflicted a few centuries ago compelled the Koreans to fix their most important cities and centres of local government in places difficult to reach and where an enemy would not be likely to look for them.

The Koreans imagine that foreigners know as little about their country as they themselves know about other lands, and nothing astonishes them more than the knowledge manifested by some recent European visitors of the position of the cities, mountains, rivers, roads, &c., in every part of the kingdom. We owe this acquaintance with Cho-sen to the Japanese, who have published an excellent map, based on the observations of their own travellers and on maps published in Corea, and corrected by a Korean scholar named King, who for some reason or other had to flee from his native land and seek refuge in Japan. Ts'uen-lo is the most southern province of the peninsula, the mainland reaching as far as Lat. $34^{\circ} 2''$, and the islands stretching seventy or eighty miles still farther south. The largest river of

the province is the Ch'en-kiang (滎江), or "Toad river," which rises in the north, near Ts'uen-cheo, drains the western half of the province and flows into the Tung-hai or Eastern Sea at the junction of Ts'uen-lo and King-shang-tao. The spacious valleys of Ts'uen-lo are capable of producing large quantities of rice and other grain, for the land is rich and always kept moist by the water which drains from the hills; but hitherto only a limited area has been cultivated, for the farmers could not find a market for surplus produce. They are not a sea-faring people, so do not care to risk losing their goods or lives in a journey to the port of Fu-san; and the nearest port by land is Jen-chuan, seven days' journey north.

There are two excellent places on the coast where ports might be opened to foreign commerce; one is at K'ang-tsing (康津), on the south, at the terminus of the great road from Séoul. For many centuries this has been the only sea-port on the Corean coast, and through it all communication with the large island of Quelpart—once an independent kingdom—has been carried on. The town of K'ang-tsing is built on the banks of a small river about three miles from the bay of the same name, and could not be approached by large vessels, but a trade port could easily be established near the entrance of the bay, where it would be protected by several large islands.

But the best place for trade would be Muh-p'oo (木浦), on the south-west, at the mouth of the Yung-san river (榮山江), for this is near the best producing districts, and the river is navigable by flat-bottomed boats as far as the town of Woo-an, where it is crossed by the great road from the capital. Fully two thirds of the islands on the Corean coast are

under the jurisdiction of the governor of Ts'uen-lo, and these have been the scene of many a terrible shipwreck. In 1653 a Dutch ship called the *Sparwehr* was wrecked on the island of Quelpart, and those of the crew who succeeded in reaching the shore were seized by the governor as a rare prize and sent under escort to Séoul. For nearly fourteen years these poor fellows were kept in most cruel bondage, sometimes in the capital, but most of the time in various parts of Ts'uen-lo. They were made to work like slaves, and received the usual wages of slaves—hard blows and poor food; sometimes even the rice allowed them by the governor was kept back and they were then compelled to beg of the people in the villages near the fields where they were made to toil. At length they made their escape in a small boat and reached Nagasaki just in time to meet a vessel sailing for Holland. Many Chinese and Japanese vessels have been wrecked on the Ts'uen-lo islands, and the crews either sent safely back to their homes or murdered, according to the caprice of the natives or the temper of the local officials. In 1847 two French men-of-war, *La Gloire* and *La Victorieuse*, grounded on a sandbank off the north-east coast of the province and had to be abandoned. The crews of these vessels, numbering about six hundred, landed on a small island and sent a boat to Shanghai—distant about 180 miles—for assistance. Though not allowed to cross to the mainland, they were permitted to purchase food from the natives who came off in great numbers. This was as much as the Frenchmen could expect, seeing that their only object in visiting the country was to demand an explanation of the murder of some Jesuit priests, and to inflict some punishment on the perpetrators of that deed.

KING-SHANG-TAO (慶尚道).

"Excellent Control" Province.

Owing partly to the warm "Japan current" which flows round the south and south-east of King-shang, its climate is more genial, and the rainfall somewhat greater than in the other provinces. The people also are more friendly toward foreigners and less quarrelsome among themselves than their brethren in the north, though quite as fond of strong drink. To some extent no doubt this is owing to the effect of the climate, but frequent intercourse with their good-natured neighbours, the Japanese, must have had considerable influence over their character as it has upon their language.

Wealth is everywhere conspicuously absent and the dwellings of the people are of the poorest kind imaginable, very much like the huts of the poor turf-cutters in the west of Ireland. But all the people seem to be well fed, robust, and quite contented with their lot. The married men dress well and appear to lead a very easy life, for most of the hard work is done by the women and unmarried youths. Like the rest of Cho-sen, King-shang is mountainous and well wooded with conifers and dwarf oaks.

In spring the hills seem all ablaze with scarlet azaleas and other bright-coloured flowers, which give the country an almost enchanting appearance. The cultivated soil is black and muddy, but evidently poor, for the rice produced is very small, and the straw hardly worth the name. Cattle raising seems to be the chief occupation of the country people,

and much attention is given to the rearing of horses of a very stunted breed. King-shang has an area of 7,875 square miles, and although it is not the largest province, it has more inhabitants than any of the other seven divisions of the kingdom. The official census recently published shows that the population is about 1,680,000, but the land is certainly capable of supporting at least twice that number. The only large river in this *tao* is the Hwang-tun-kiang (黄屯江), also called the Luh-tung-kiang, which rises in the hills on the south of Kiang-yuen-tao, and runs the entire length of the province, it is joined by about a dozen affluents and flows into the Straits of Corea near the newly opened port of Fu-san. The provincial capital, Ta-k'iu (大邱), is sixty miles north-east of Fu-san and ten miles west of the middle road to Séoul.

The natives report that silver and quick-silver mines have for many years been worked in the north of the province, and the Japanese have discovered a seam of coal in the south. Copper ore is one of the articles exported from Fu-san, and the natives pay for many of their imports in gold dust and nuggets obtained from the hills and beds of streams. A great quantity of fine silica is brought down the hills by the waters of the Hwang-tun and deposited in banks on the shore, so there is a prospect of glass-making being one of the future trades of Corea. Sharks abound on the south coast, and are caught at certain seasons for the sake of their fins, which are highly esteemed as an article of diet by the epicures of China and Japan. Shark fishing is considered a very dangerous occupation under any circumstances, but the Coreans have a method of catching the voracious monsters with little danger to themselves. They draw them into narrow inlets by

throwing tempting baits into the water and cut off their retreat by dropping heavily-weighted nets in their rear; these are gradually moved towards the shore and the sharks pinned into a corner from which they are easily dragged ashore and speared to death. The 10th moon is a lively time among the fishermen, for then the bays and inlets on the south are visited by shoals of ribbon fish. To catch these a large net about thirty yards square is let down in a shallow place marked out by stakes, then a number of boats are pushed off from the shore following each other about a hundred yards apart, the men all the while beating gongs and shouting to frighten the fish and drive them toward the net. They first make a circuit of half a mile or more, then move in ever narrowing circles till they are near the centre when they cease shouting and quietly draw up the nets. Often fifty or sixty men are engaged in beating round one net, and the time required to complete the circuits is about twelve hours. Japanese boats are always at hand to receive the fish and race over to Nagasaki with their cargoes just as eagerly as the tea steamers race from China to England with the new season's crop, each striving to be first in port and so secure the highest price.

To the lover of history the province of King-shang is a most interesting part of the kingdom. The city of King-cheo near Unkoffsky Bay was the capital of the ancient kingdom of Sing-lo or Shinra, which was the first state in the peninsula to adopt the civilization and learning of China. Wei-san (蔚山) on the south-east coast was in 1598 the scene of one of the most terrible wars on record, for there the Japanese invaders were surrounded for several months by the allied armies of China and Corea and in the battles daily fought around the Japanese

entrenchments it is reported that over two hundred thousand soldiers were killed. The Japanese were at last victorious and returned to their own land with a shipload of ears and noses cut from the faces of their defeated enemies.

This was all they gained by an invasion which impoverished this country and cost them the lives of at least sixty thousand men.

RELIGION.

What in Western nations is usually understood by the term "religion" has no existence in Corea, and in this it differs somewhat from the other countries of Asia. What is called the "state religion" is the ethical system of Confucius, which is in no sense a religion; and the doctrines of the great Chinese sage, though theoretically adhered to by the official and literary classes, have had little if any influence over the minds of the great mass of the people.

Buddhism was introduced into Corea in the fourth century and rapidly spread over the peninsula and thence into Japan. For several centuries it was the established religion of the kingdom, and its priests had great influence at Court, but on the accession of the present dynasty some five hundred years ago it was vigorously suppressed, and Confucianism declared to be the only "tao" (doctrine) henceforth to be taught in the country.

Buddhism had not gained such a firm hold on the hearts of the Coreans as it had over the Chinese and Japanese, or it could not have been so easily or so thoroughly eradicated as it was. A few traces of it are left, such as the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, but only a few of the more superstitious believe in it. Some of the more prominent and popular public benefactors are deified after their decease and worshipped by the people; and ancestral worship, which is common to both Buddhists and Confucianists is universally practised, and will prove the greatest obstacle to the progress of Christianity. This

stitutions are so scarce in Corea. The Buddhists are not a persecuting sect, and are content to live in peace so long as they are not interfered with, but Confucianists are everywhere proud and intolerant, and the most bitter enemies of Christianity. Most of the persecutions of Christians in China and all in Corea have been instigated by the disciples of Confucius, who themselves have done nothing to enlighten the people or to raise them from the depths of ignorance and superstition into which they have sunk, but—like the Papists—they endeavour to keep the lower classes in the dark so that their own feeble light may appear the brighter by contrast.

Near the end of last century a few Christian books written by the Roman Catholics in China were taken into Corea by members of the Embassy and fell into the hands of several scholars, who soon perceived the superiority of the new doctrines over anything they themselves possessed. More books were obtained from Pekin, and several men who seemed to have a remarkable craving for knowledge joined the tribute bearers in order to get an interview with the priests in the Chinese capital. Some of these were secretly baptized in Pekin and returned to their own country to labour as missionaries. In the provinces of Chung-ts'ing and Ts'uen-lo the new religion found ready acceptance and in a few years the zealous missionaries reported over ten thousand converts. The progress of the new doctrines roused the jealousy of the Confucianists, for they saw as the Christians increased they must decrease. The rulers were urged to nip the new sect in the bud, so they seized the leaders and put them to death and then hunted out the converts, whom they slaughtered without mercy. The persecutors were nearly tired of their bloody work, when unfortunately a letter

Written by a Korean convert of noble birth to the foreign priests in Peking was intercepted by the officials, and in it was found an urgent appeal to the "Western Nations" to send soldiers to invade the country and compel the rulers to admit the Christian religion. The work of butchering the converts was then renewed with greater zeal than ever, for now the officials had the plea of treason as an excuse for their cruelty.

In 1836 a French priest entered the country from Manchuria via Yi-chiao-foo on the Yu-lu river, and was shortly afterwards joined by two of his *cofreres*. They took advantage of a Korean custom which requires a mourner to wear a veil of sack-cloth over the lower part of his face, and a huge bamboo hat made in the shape of a cone and reaching down to the level of his shoulders. In this disguise they were able to travel about without fear of detection, for a man in full mourning is expected to be silent, and it is a breach of etiquette to speak to him. All went well for three years and the number of converts increased, but one day the priests were discovered and after being severely tortured were beheaded on the banks of the river Han, near Seoul. In 1845 two more Frenchmen sailed from Shanghai in a small boat accompanied by two Koreans who had been educated in the Jesuit college in Macao. They landed on the coast of T'chen-lo and were enabled to carry on their work without interruption until 1853, when one of them died. A priest named Janson soon arrived to fill up the breach which death had made, but he also died soon after reaching Seoul. During the next ten years the missionary ranks were continually reinforced by the arrival of new men from France, and the work of proselytizing went on rapidly. In 1864 the king suddenly died and

Mr. Thomas of Chefoo volunteered to go to Corea as agent of the Scottish National Bible Society, and obtained a passage in the *General Sherman* which called at Chefoo en route for Corea, where the owners hoped to open a trade of some sort. The unfortunate vessel grounded in the Ta-tung river, and all on board were murdered.

Mr. Ross of Monkden and other missionaries have for several years been engaged in translating the New Testament and preparing tracts in the Corean language; and several native colporteurs have been employed to take the books into the country and secretly circulate them. In September 1883 a Chinese soldier who was going from Chefoo to join his camp in Séoul volunteered to take some Christian books for presentation to Corean officials, but on arriving in the capital his books were seized and sent in to the King for inspection. A decree was immediately issued ordering the arrest of all sellers of Christian books, and the Chinese soldier was the first to be imprisoned. Many of the old conservative nobles demanded the execution of the offender; but General Wu, the commander of the Chinese forces came forward and saved him, at the same time giving the Corean Government a little sound advice on the subject of toleration.

He said, "This is a good man, and I will not allow him to be injured for such an offence, and as to the books he has brought, they will do you no harm, and you need not believe them unless you like. We have them all over our country, and they have never injured any one yet." Probably this advice had a good effect on the members of the Tsung-li Yamén, who at that time were discussing various plans for keeping out missionaries and Christian literature, and had decided to include the latter in the list of prohibited imports. But this

decision has not yet been made law, and probably never will be, for the liberal and progressive party is rapidly gaining influence at Court. The Chinese in Séoul declare that the foreign advisers of the Government are far more bitterly opposed to the introduction of Christianity than even the most bigoted native officials, and it would not be difficult to prove that this statement is about correct. But among the foreign Customs officials there are some who have not yet cast off all religion and who would do all in this power to aid any missionary—especial *Medical*—who may commence work in the ports.

Missionaries and religious literature are not mentioned in the treaties between Corea and other nations, but in the treaty with England there is a stipulation that books of an "immoral or seditious" character are to be prohibited, and as Christian books are at present considered by the Coreans to be "immoral," and Christian missionaries simply seditious agitators in disguise, that clause will very likely be interpreted as applying specially to them. British and American subjects have now right to travel in the peninsula "for business or pleasure," but it is more than probable that for some years missionaries will be required to confine their operations within the narrow limits of the treaty ports, as the local officials have power to refuse passports to persons whom they consider it unsafe to admit into the interior. The French endeavored to have a "missionary clause" inserted in their treaty, but the Corean Government steadfastly refused it.

In October last the writer of these notes visited the "Hermit Kingdom" on behalf of the Scottish National Bible Society for the purpose of obtaining information, and during the six weeks he spent there was enabled to put

themselves. They are also examined on the subject of national law, &c., and a little knowledge of geography is required, but, as a scholar once naively remarked, "we can put down whatever we please under that head, for the examiner hardly knows North from South." The cultured Confucianist is rather proud of his ignorance of all matters not treated of in the writings of his "master," and affects to look upon an extensive acquaintance with the world, or even with his own country, as appertaining only to scoundrels and barbarians, and therefore altogether beyond the province of a man of letters. Hence the assumed ignorance of those highly intellectual gentlemen so often met by the foreign traveller in China who ask such childish questions as, "Have you hills and rivers in your country?" "Have you a moon? &c.," and profess surprise when they are assured that the small nations of the outer world do really share the blessings so richly bestowed on the "Middle Kingdom."

A *Coren* graduate and his rank is known by a coloured stripe on the collar of his long gown. He is highly esteemed by the common people, and enjoys certain civil privileges which are denied his humbler brethren; he may commit slight offences with impunity, and cannot be punished in the usual nursery fashion.

"NUNG-PAI"—THE AGRICULTURAL CLASS.

Most of the tillers of the soil are nominally the serfs of the nobles and landed proprietors, but their slavery is of a very mild kind, and they have almost as much liberty as the free-men, besides being better cared for in times of distress or famine. Intellectually they are superior to the same class in China, for they have the advantage of an easily learned alphabetic language, in which most of the native

books are written. Thus, while a Chinaman must study hard for several years before he can read the easiest book known, a Corean can learn to read fluently in a few months. In the practical work of raising crops the Corean agriculturists are a long way behind the Chinese.

This is due in part to the paralyzing influence of serfdom and partly to that dislike of hard work which seems to be a national characteristic. This apparent laziness is no doubt caused by the fact that, if a labouring man should acquire a little surplus wealth, he is never sure he will be allowed to retain it, so he has nothing to gain by being industrious, and is content to "live from hand to mouth."

Most of the hard work on a farm is done by women; they manure the fields, sow the seed, reap the crops, thresh, winnow, and grind the corn, and attend to all the wants of the family.

The men follow the plough, convey the produce to market, and attend to the rearing and sale of cattle. The implements used in farming are of the most primitive kind, the blade of the plough is a flat spade which is made to enter the ground almost at a right angle with the surface, thus entailing much unnecessary labour on the poor beast which has to drag it along. The bulls used for ploughing and as beasts of burden are a splendid breed, and if well fed would be equal to the finest in Europe. The farm labourers are a fine stalwart race of men, taller and of much superior physique to the same class in China and Japan.

"KUNG-PAN"—THE ARTIZAN CLASS.

One natural result of the exclusive and suppressive policy so long pursued by the Corean Government has been the degradation of this indispensable class of men, and the loss

shops, but innumerable stalls and booths, and a few general stores where the many little articles required by the housewife can be bought. The only real merchants in Corea are the Japanese, who monopolize nearly all the export trade and keep two lines of small steamers running between their own country and the three ports of Corea.

In addition to these four classes there are the "small people," barbers, chair coolies, play actors, fishermen, butchers, &c., against whom the doors of all literary institutions are closed. They are kept from rising beyond their own sphere by a strong popular prejudice, and can never take part in examinations for literary honours or official employment.

Barbers and chair bearers are disfranchised because of their menial occupation; actors because they have to dress in female attire in the plays; fishermen, butchers, &c., because they take life. In this we trace the effects of the Buddhist doctrine of the transmigration of souls, which makes those who believe it afraid to take the life of one of the lower animals, lest in so doing they should unwittingly destroy the embodiment of one of their own ancestors, and so bring bad luck upon themselves.

The Coreans are too fond of beef for such a doctrine ever to be really believed, but it has influenced their minds to some extent, and they console themselves with the thought that, if it is true, the sin rests on those who slay the animals and not on those who eat the flesh.

RECENT HISTORY.

Those who wish to enquire more fully into the past history of this interesting country should consult "The Hermit Nation" by Griffiths, and "Corea" by Ross, the object of these notes being only to record the changes which have recently taken place, and to show how these changes have been brought about.

The policy of the present dynasty has always been entire isolation from surrounding nations, and although their seclusion has many times been rudely disturbed by the invading armies of China and Japan, they have returned to their hermit life immediately after the withdrawal of their enemies. They have paid tribute and acknowledged the suzerainty of both their neighbours for the sake of peace, but still have steadfastly declined all friendly intercourse with them. Not even the Chinese, to whom they are nearly related and on whom they naturally lean for support, were allowed to cross the borders except on official business, and in order to render their isolation more complete they devastated their coasts, and sacrificed about 10,000 square miles of rich meadow land and forest, to create a strip of neutral territory between their northern borders and Manchuria.

Since the year 1597 the Japanese have held possession of a few acres of land on the south-east coast, to keep open a door for the entrance of their armies in the event of another invasion becoming necessary, but until a few years ago they were confined within the limits of their own settlement, and the Koreans forbidden to trade with them. Many times have

the Western nations and private enterprisers made overtures to the King of Corea, but were always insolently repulsed. Friendly representations, threats of invasion, and even the powerful argument of French cannons and American bayonets have been tried in succession, but all failed to convince the astute Coreans that they would be in any way benefited by intercourse with the "Wai-yi" (outside barbarians), as all foreigners except Chinese are contemptuously styled

In 1866, the French Chargé d'Affairs in China having heard of the massacre of the Jesuits and their converts in Corea, took upon himself the task of punishing the Tai-yuen-kuin, who was then regent, and even went so far as to declare the throne vacant, and at his master's disposal. He wrote a very insulting letter to the Chinese Prime Minister, Prince Kung, and charged the Chinese Government with complicity in the murder. Those who know that Mons. Bellonet was acting on his own responsibility, and that he was afterwards snubbed by his Government for his officiousness will read the following extract from his bombastic despatch with some interest.

"The same day on which the King of Corea laid his hands on my unhappy countrymen was the last of his reign; he himself proclaimed its end, which I, in turn, solemnly declare to-day. In a few days our military forces are to march to the conquest of Corea, and the Emperor, my August Sovereign, alone has now the right and power to dispose according to his good pleasure of the country and the vacant throne," &c.

Having thus given vent to the fierceness of his wrath, he despatched seven men-of-war with a force of a thousand soldiers and marines to conquer the "small kingdom."

With a Jesuit priest as pilot the vessels steamed up the river Han, but after a few slight skirmishes, in some of which the French were defeated, and having shelled a few unfortified villages and killed a few harmless peasants—as they are now doing on the coast of Madagascar—this formidable fleet returned to China, to the inexpressible astonishment of the people they had gone to conquer, and the intense disgust of most of the foreigners in China, who at that time were very anxious for some manifestation of European power in the East.

A few months before this ludicrous fiasco of the French, a schooner called the *General Sherman* had been sent by an American firm to open trade with the Coreans, but the vessel was seized and destroyed, and all on board murdered. This led to the despatch of an American man-of-war, the *Wachusett* to enquire into the affair, but the Corean officials refused to give any information, and the only reply the Captain could get from the capital was a request that he would depart as soon as possible. An old man who was employed by the Americans to carry their letter to the Regent, was beheaded as soon as he reached Séoul. Nothing more was heard of this affair till 1870, when the U.S. Government sent an expedition consisting of several men-of-war to demand satisfaction, and if possible force the Coreans to open the country to foreign commerce. The fleet anchored near the present port of Jenchuan and several small officials were sent from Séoul to parley with them, but after several days of the usual diplomatic humbug they were no nearer the attainment of their object than at the beginning, and were uncertain how to act. The treachery of the Coreans in firing upon a surveying party brought matters to an unexpected

the Western nations and private enterprises made presents to the King of China, but were always instantly rejected. Friendly representations, threats of reversion, and even the powerful argument of French commerce and American business have been tried in succession, but all failed to convince the noble Chinese that they would be in any way benefited by intercourse with the "Wang" outside barbarians, as all languages except Chinese are contemptuously styled.

In 1861, the French *Chargé d'Affaires* in China, having heard of the massacre of the French and their converts in Szechuen, had organized the task of punishing the Tz'u-pu-chai, who was then regent, and even went so far as to deliver the Chinese treaty, and at his master's disposal. He wrote a very insulting letter to the Chinese Prime Minister, Prince Kung, and charged the Chinese Government with complicity in the murder. Those who knew that M. de Bellouet was acting on his own responsibility, and that he was afterwards exonerated by his Government for his officiousness will read the following extract from his harkback despatch with some interest.

"The same day on which the King of China laid his hands on my unhappy countrymen was the last of his reign; he himself proclaimed its end, which I, in turn, solemnly declare today. In a few days our military forces are to march to the conquest of Szechuen, and the Emperor, my dearest sovereign, who has seen the right and power to dispose according to his good pleasure of the country and the mortal throne, &c.

Having thus given vent to the bitterness of his wrath, he dispatched seven men-of-war with a fleet of a thousand soldiers and sailors to conquer the "small kingdom."

With a Jesuit priest as pilot the vessels steamed up the river Han, but after a few slight skirmishes, in some of which the French were defeated, and having shelled a few unfortified villages and killed a few harmless peasants—as they are now doing on the coast of Madagascar—this formidable fleet returned to China, to the inexpressible astonishment of the people they had gone to conquer, and the intense disgust of most of the foreigners in China, who at that time were very anxious for some manifestation of European power in the East.

A few months before this ludicrous fiasco of the French, a schooner called the *General Sherman* had been sent by an American firm to open trade with the Koreans, but the vessel was seized and destroyed, and all on board murdered. This led to the despatch of an American man-of-war, the *Wachusett* to enquire into the affair, but the Korean officials refused to give any information, and the only reply the Captain could get from the capital was a request that he would depart as soon as possible. An old man who was employed by the Americans to carry their letter to the Regent, was beheaded as soon as he reached Séoul. Nothing more was heard of this affair till 1870, when the U.S. Government sent an expedition consisting of several men-of-war to demand satisfaction, and if possible force the Koreans to open the country to foreign commerce. The fleet anchored near the present port of Jenchuan and several small officials were sent from Séoul to parley with them, but after several days of the usual diplomatic humbug they were no nearer the attainment of their object than at the beginning, and were uncertain how to act. The treachery of the Koreans in firing upon a surveying party brought matters to an unexpected

Meanwhile, General Kuroda was sent with a few gunboats to demand satisfaction for the insult, and compel the Korean Government to open the country to Japanese commerce, letting them know that a refusal would be followed by a declaration of war. No one imagined that Kuroda would succeed in his mission, but in less than three months he returned with a commercial treaty granting to the Japanese right to trade in Korea and to open the three ports of Jenchuan, Fusan, and Yuen-san.

The members of the war party in Japan were greatly chagrined when they learned that such a splendid opportunity had been lost of testing their newly acquired military power on a weak enemy, but all lovers of peace rejoiced that Korean prejudice had at last been broken down without bloodshed. In Korea the news that the country was to be opened to foreign trade caused great alarm, and for some time civil war seemed imminent. Threatening letters were sent to the King, and deputations were sent from all parts to petition the Government not to bring ruin and disaster upon the country by admitting the barbarians. The King found he had stirred up a hornets' nest, but by making promises which he never intended to keep he pacified the people, and by the unsparing use of the executioner's sword, he soon rid himself of his most violent opposers. Hearing of the success of Japan, the American, English, French, German and Italian representatives all essayed to procure the same privileges for their respective countries, but the King knew that to depart further from the policy of his ancestors at that time would endanger his own life and put a stop to all progress, so he wisely rejected the overtures of the persistent foreigners, until he could safely accept them.

After a lapse of six years the people had recovered from the scare caused by the opening of the ports to the Japanese, and early in the year 1882 the King and his liberal Government—acting on advice from China—resolved to make another move; and the nations which had so long tried in vain to force open the gates of Corea now received a hint that if they tried again they might be more successful.

Although there are no telegraphs in Corea, in a few days the news had spread over every part of the land that the last vestige of their ancient and cherished isolation was to be swept away and, as before, great consternation prevailed. The notorious Tai yuen knin, the King's father and the other anti-foreign nobles did their utmost to stir up rebellion and, as will be related hereafter, they were not altogether unsuccessful. Most of the literati of the country were opposed to the King, and many of them wrote to him insolently charging him with bringing the country to ruin. Others considered him the tool of certain high officials and clamoured for the degradation and execution of the whole class, as being opposed to the best interests of the kingdom. One midsummer evening in 1882 a band of scholars from the province of Chung-tsing assembled in the Nan-san fort, near Séoul "to discuss the affairs of the kingdom" they said, but really to plot the overthrow of the liberal party then in power at Court. They were all arrested and would have been summarily beheaded but for the fact that the land was suffering from drought and the shedding of blood had been forbidden until the anger of the gods had been appeased and rain should once more descend upon the earth. Though cast into prison these men were by no means daunted, but appointed one of their number, a scholar named Peli-lo-kwen, to act as spokes-

men to the party and demand in their name the execution of the "unfaithful ministers." The letter written by Peh-lo-kwen to the King shows him to have been a master in the art of Chinese composition, for the characters were so cunningly chosen and arranged as to convey at once a respectful and an insulting meaning.

The following almost literal translation of this epistle will give the reader some idea of the ignorance and fanaticism which prevails among the Confucian scholars in Corea. It shows also that the framework of society had become very shaky at that time, or a number of private men would never have dared to address an absolute monarch as these scholars addressed their King. The letter was headed thus :—

"TO THE KING OF CHAO-SIEN, AN ADDRESS BY THE
DISCIPLES OF CONFUCIUS.

"I, the scholar, Pen-lo-kwen, of Chung-tsing-tao commence this letter to my King with fear and trembling. I and my companions have done nothing worthy of death, but even if we are condemned we will not seek to escape.

"I am only a private individual, but my father was an officer of the King's guard, and during the forty years that he was in office he served under three Kings,—we had *good* Kings in those days. The favour with which these sovereigns treated my father was equal to heaven and earth in extent, and he in return devoted his whole life to their interests until he was struck down by paralysis.

"Although I am but a fool, yet I strive to imitate my father's faithfulness, for the Leng-yü says that a faithless official and an unfilial son ought to be put to death. I am willing to die, but I must first unburden my mind to the King, and hope he will not refuse to hear me.

"The present race of officials in Chao-sien are all unfaithful and unfilial; they read the books of Kung Meng, Ching and Chü, but secretly follow the doctrines of Jesus Christ. They eat their country's rice, but wear foreign cloth; they are rulers of Chao-sien, but are under the orders of foreigners. They have departed from the truth, and wish to throw off their civilization and become barbarians; they seek only their own advantage, and not the good of the country. They ought therefore to die. We have many enemies, but none are to be feared so much as the unfaithful ministers, and the Japanese, who from ancient times have been our foes. Let the King order the execution of the officials, and break off all relationship with the Japanese, for they seek only our ruin, and are only restrained by fear of China from invading our country. From others we have nothing to fear. The Russians were defeated by the Chinese a few years ago (in Ili?) and returned to their own land burning with rage; they have decided to spend ten years in sharpening their swords and ten years more in learning military tactics before they attempt to fight again. But even if they should attack us, they would have no chance against our brave soldiers, although their weapons are superior, so we need not fear them. The Americans, French and English are too far away to do us either good or harm; so we have nothing to fear if we drive them away and nothing to gain by an alliance. The Chinese are our friends, so let the King cling to them and discard all others; but first let the treacherous Ministers be put to death, and then we shall have peace. I know that what I say is true and if I kept silence I should be as bad as an unfaithful official and an unfilial

was. Let the King enquire first these matters
himself.

"PHELI-KWEN

"Respectfully bows his head and washings."

The drought which aided the writer of this letter and his associates from being put in chains, was continued and the people began to fear that the crops should be destroyed and a famine result. The masters of the artificial famine were not slow in taking advantage of this state of things and easily persuaded the superstitious people that rain was withheld because the gods were angry at the presence of foreigners.

In the capital the excitement every day increased, and the ranks of the disaffected were swelled by the soldiers and others dependent on the Government whose pay was in arrear and who were threatened with short rations if the drought continued. At length the fire, which had been smouldering so long, burst forth into flames, and on the 28th of July 1892 the soldiers and citizens arose en masse, determined to annihilate the foreign intruders and all the native officials who had sided the King in the recent innovations. For some hours the mob rushed wildly about the city without doing any damage, but toward evening bands of rioters led by the agents of the old Regent attacked the residence of the principal liberal ministers, several of whom they murdered. Even the King narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the insurgents, and for a long time it was supposed Queen Ming had been poisoned by order of her father-in-law the 'Tai-yuen-kuin, but a female attendant was poisoned and her body passed off as that of the Queen, who remained in hiding till the storm had blown over.

Several members of the Japanese Legation who were walking about the city were mur-

land, and the Chinese attacked the Japanese officers. Great numbers were killed before, and themselves bravely, the several hours, sending many of their assailants to their last moment, till the Chinese set fire to the city market building, and the Japanese had no alternative but to cut back way through the mud and mire for the palace, where they felt sure of protection. Here they were kindly disappointed for the general refused to open the gates, and drove them away. They then rushed out of the city, and under cover of the darkness escaped from their pursuers, and got safely across the river at the place on the high-way to Jen-chuan. As it is, possibly the worst of the misers the town now began to pour down its torrents, pointing to the celebration of the superstitious natives that it was indeed the presence of foreigners which had caused the long and a drought, and that now the gods were sending the rain as a token of approval.

The Japanese fugitives rested on all night through the rain and mud, but did not reach Jen-chuan till the afternoon of the following day. The magistrate of that town treated them kindly and did all he could to make them comfortable, but during the night they were again attacked by an armed mob and several of their number killed. With true Japanese pluck they fought their way through their cowardly assailants and an hour's brisk run brought them to Chi-mul-p'oo, the principal port of Jen-chuan, where they procured a fishing boat and put out to sea. They were fortunately picked up the next day by the British surveying vessel *Flying Fish*, and taken to Nagasaki. The Japanese were naturally very indignant at this outrage, and without an hour's delay their troops and men-of-war were prepared for an invasion of Corea. Twenty thousand young men at once volun-

son. Let the King enquire into these matters himself.

"PEN-LO-EWEN

"Reverently bows his head and worships."

The drought, which saved the writer of this letter and his associates from being put to death, still continued and the people began to fear lest all the crops should be destroyed and a famine result. The leaders of the anti-foreign faction were not slow in taking advantage of this state of things and easily persuaded the superstitious people that rain was withheld because the gods were angry at the presence of foreigners.

In the capital the excitement every day increased, and the ranks of the disaffected were swelled by the soldiers and others dependent on the Government whose pay was in arrear and who were threatened with short rations if the drought continued. At length the fire, which had been smouldering so long, burst forth into flames, and on the 23rd of July 1882 the soldiers and citizens arose *en masse*, determined to annihilate the foreign intruders and all the native officials who had aided the King in the recent innovations. For some hours the mob rushed wildly about the city without doing any damage, but toward evening bands of rioters led by the agents of the old Regent attacked the residence of the principal liberal ministers, several of whom they murdered. Even the King narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the insurgents, and for a long time it was supposed Queen Ming had been poisoned by order of her father-in-law the T'ai-yuen-kuin, but a female attendant was poisoned and her body passed off as that of the Queen, who remained in hiding till the storm had blown over.

Several members of the Japanese Legation who were walking about the city were mur-

dered, and then the mob attacked the Legation offices. Consul Hanabusa and his staff defended themselves bravely for several hours, sending many of their assailants to their last account, but the Koreans set fire to the dry wooden building and the Japanese had no alternative but to cut their way through the mob and make for the palace, where they felt sure of protection. Here they were bitterly disappointed for the general refused to open the gates, and drove them away. They then rushed out of the city, and under cover of the darkness escaped from their pursuers and got safely across the river at Ma-p'oo on the highway to Jen-chuan. As if to justify the actions of the rioters the rain now began to pour down in torrents, proving to the satisfaction of the superstitious natives that it was indeed the presence of foreigners which had caused the long season of drought, and that now the gods were sending the rain as a token of approval.

The Japanese fugitives toiled on all night through the rain and mud, but did not reach Jen-chuan till the afternoon of the following day. The magistrate of that town treated them kindly and did all he could to make them comfortable, but during the night they were again attacked by an armed mob and several of their number killed. With true Japanese pluck they fought their way through their cowardly assailants and an hour's brisk run brought them to Chi-mul p'oo, the present port of Jen-chuan, where they procured a fishing boat and put out to sea. They were fortunately picked up the next day by the British surveying vessel *Flying Fish*, and taken to Nagasaki. The Japanese were naturally very indignant at this outrage, and without an hour's delay their troops and men-of-war were prepared for an invasion of Corea. Twenty thousand young men at once volun-

ment also agreed to pay 50,000 dollars to the relatives of the murdered Japanese, but the national exchequer was empty, so they had to beg time for the payment of even so small a sum. The affair was thus happily settled, but the authorities in Peking commanded Wu-chang-fah to remain in the capital with his troops to maintain order and prevent further outbreak, for it was rumoured that the rebel leaders who had escaped were stirring up the people in the provinces. The Japanese Consul also considered it necessary to retain a strong military force for his own protection.

A proclamation was shortly afterwards issued by the King, giving his reasons for departing from the ancient policy of his country, and showing the people how greatly they themselves would be benefitted by being on friendly terms with other countries, but at the same time declaring his determination to keep out the Christian religion. It is too long to be given here in full, but the following abbreviated translation will suffice to show the policy of the King and the present Government.

PROCLAMATION OF THE KING OF KOREA.

"For five hundred years we have carefully guarded our coasts to prevent intercourse with foreigners, therefore we have seen and heard but little of other people. In Europe and America many wonderful things have been invented, they are all wealthy countries, their railways and steamers are all over the world, they compete with each other in the perfection of their armies, and are honest in all their dealings with each other. Formerly China was the first of all nations, but now these kingdoms are her equal, and she has made treaties of friendship with them. Even Japan, on the extreme edge of the sea has entered into commercial relationship with

these countries. In the year Ping-tsz (1876) my kingdom made a treaty with Japan by which three ports were opened to them, and now, contrary to our ancient customs I am about to make treaties with England, America and Germany. For this change I am abused by all the scholars and people in the kingdom, yet I bear it patiently, knowing there is nothing to be ashamed of. Our intercourse with these countries will be on terms of equality, and you have no reason to be grieved if we permit foreigners to dwell in our kingdom.

"History proves that from ancient times it has been the custom of nations to trade with each other, yet you stupid literati consider this an evil custom, and wish me to keep aloof from all other nations. Why do you not consider that if when foreigners come as friends we call out our soldiers and drive them away, we shall make enemies of all the people under heaven; we shall stand alone without a friend, while all other countries are bound together, and if they send their armies against us we shall certainly be defeated.

"You say that if we admit foreigners into our country we must of necessity admit their false religion also. But we can be friendly without accepting their religion, we can treat them according to the rules of international law, but need not allow them to preach their doctrines. Hitherto you have read only the books of Confucius and Mencius, and their doctrines are so firmly rooted in your hearts that even if the foreigners should attempt to propagate their religion it is impossible for you to be influenced thereby. If some stupid empty-headed people should learn and believe the foreign doctrines, we have an unalterable law by which they must die, and may not be pardoned, so it will be easy to get rid of that religion. The foreign religion is wicked and

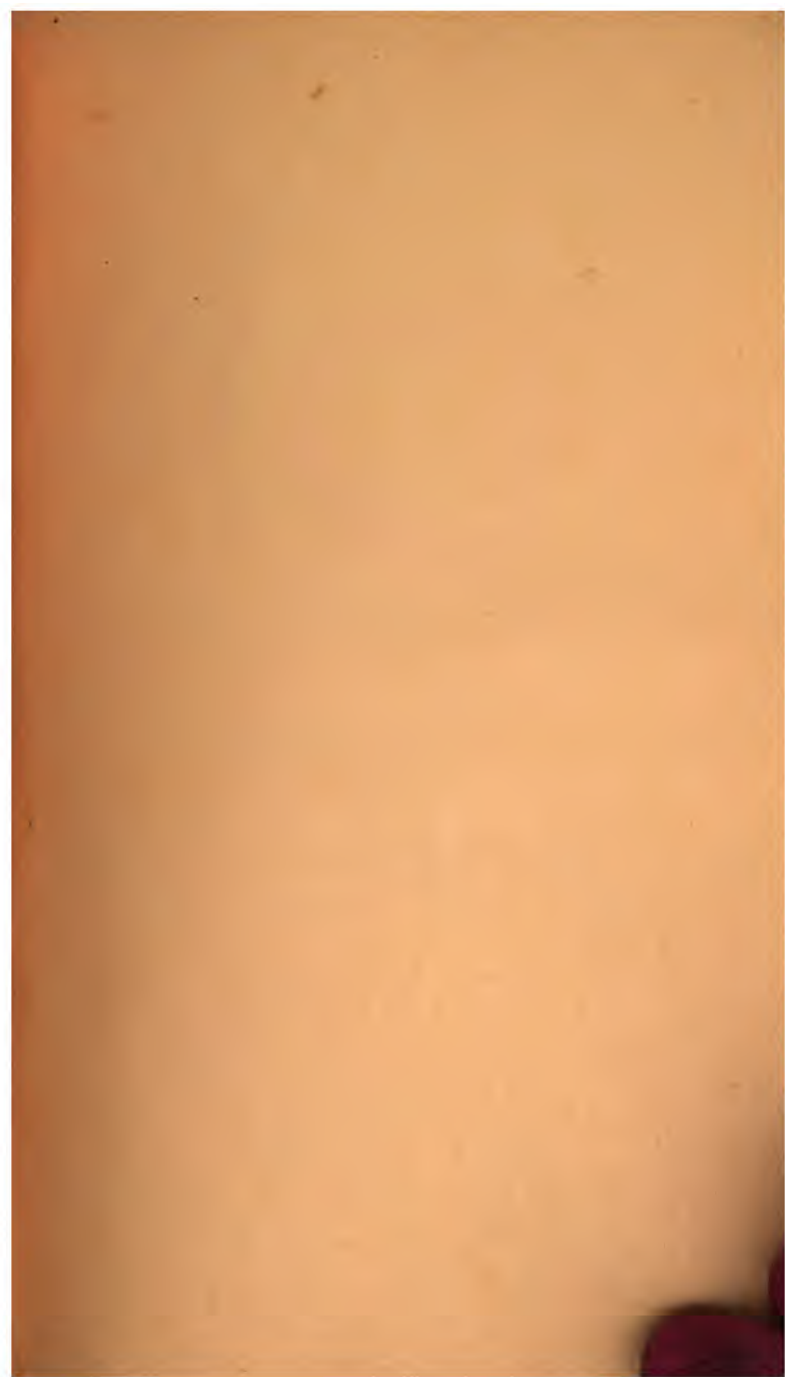
Consul in Shanghai, has recently been appointed Inspector of Korean Customs, and under his able management great improvement may be expected.

Silver and copper mines have been opened and are worked by foreign steam machinery, smelting works and a glass manufactory are being built. Telegraphic communication with Japan has been established. The army is being properly organized and drilled by Chinese officers who have themselves been taught by Europeans. The people are becoming reconciled to the new order of things, but it is still considered advisable to keep the Chinese army in the capital, and when the King leaves the palace he is surrounded by a guard of Chinese soldiers. Whether this is in accordance with the King's own wish, or is only part of the plan of Li Hung-chang to convince the people that they are under a Chinese protectorate it is difficult to determine. In all the treaties with Corea the missionary question is ignored, but Missionaries are free to work in the ports, and by the time they have acquired the language the country will probably be thrown open to them as in China and Japan. At present there will be many difficulties to contend against, for the Customs authorities have received instruction to prevent the importation of Christian books, and the local officials will be bound to do all in their power to stop the preaching of the gospel.

It is not likely the devil will allow this last of his strongholds to be attacked without resistance, but in spite of all opposition the gospel must conquer, and ere long, even in Corea, the Kingdom of God shall be established, and a people gathered out unto the name of Christ.

The object of the writer of these notes has been to create an interest in this remarkable

country, and by shewing what it has been, what it is, and what it is capable of developing into, to urge the Christian Church to make some speedy effort for its evangelization. It is a disgrace to Christian Missions that this country should be still without a resident missionary while foreigners of all nationalities who seek only their own temporal advantage have for over a year been living in the ports.







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